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the SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN

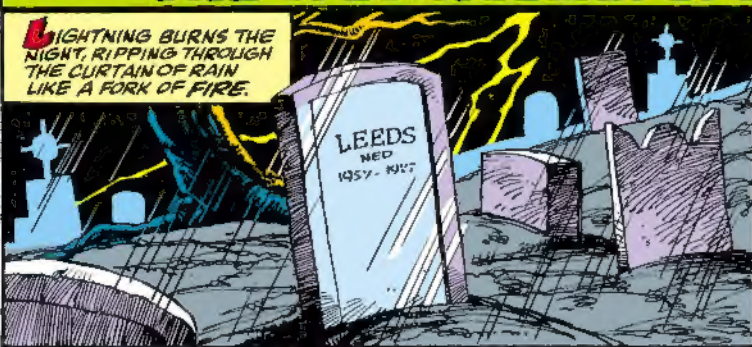
NED LEEDS RETURNS!

INFERNO
CONTINUES



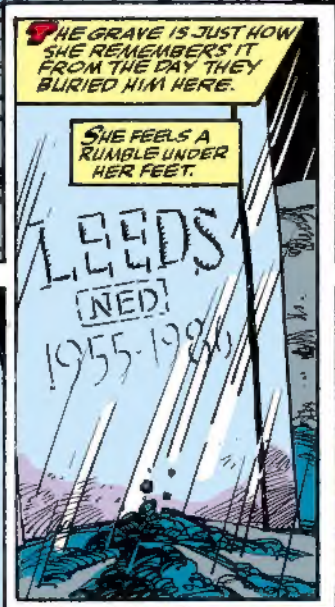
STAN LEE PRESENTS: **THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN!**™

LIGHTNING BURNS THE NIGHT, RIPPING THROUGH THE CURTAIN OF RAIN LIKE A FORK OF FIRE.



THE GRAVE IS JUST HOW SHE REMEMBERS IT FROM THE DAY THEY BURIED HIM HERE.

SHE FEELS A RUMBLE UNDER HER FEET.

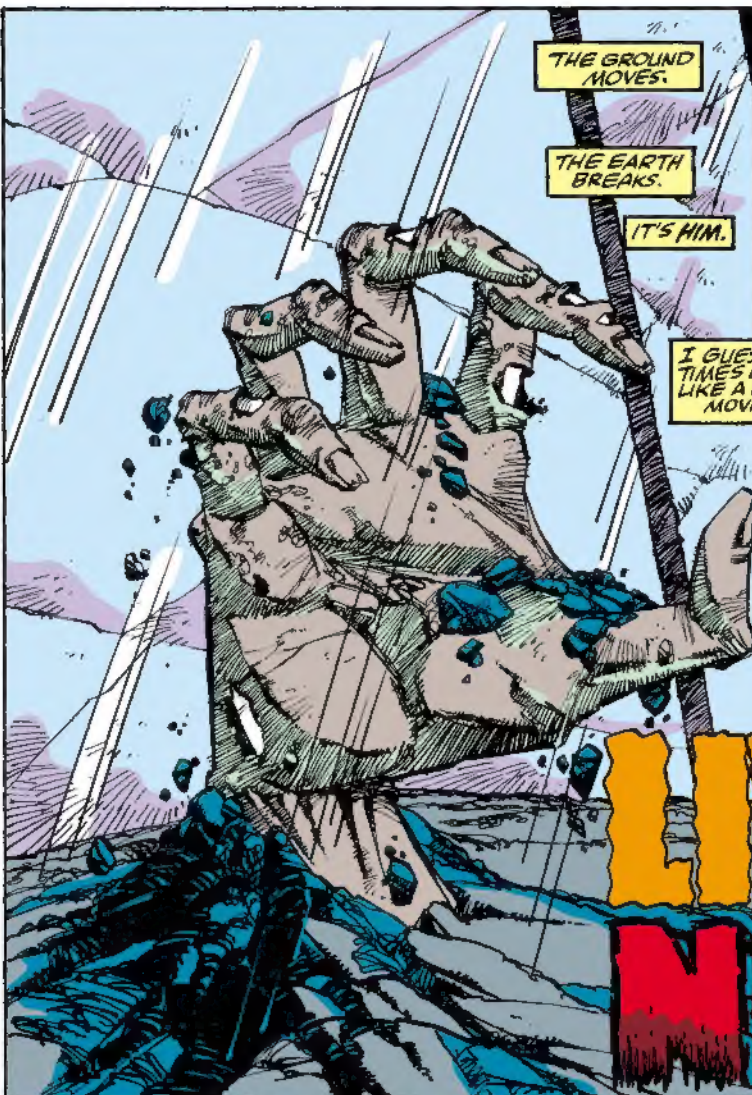


THE GROUND MOVES.

THE EARTH BREAKS.

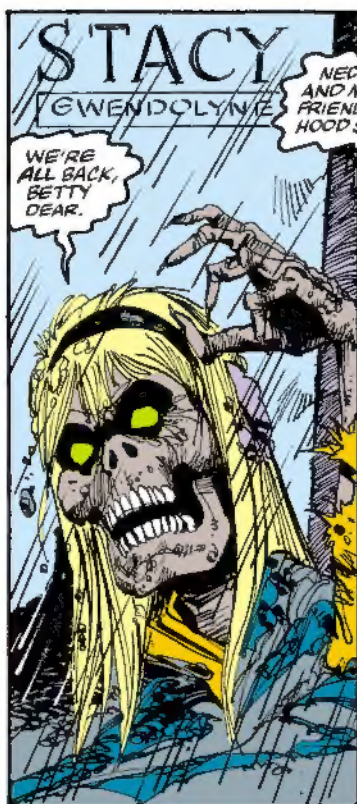
IT'S HIM.

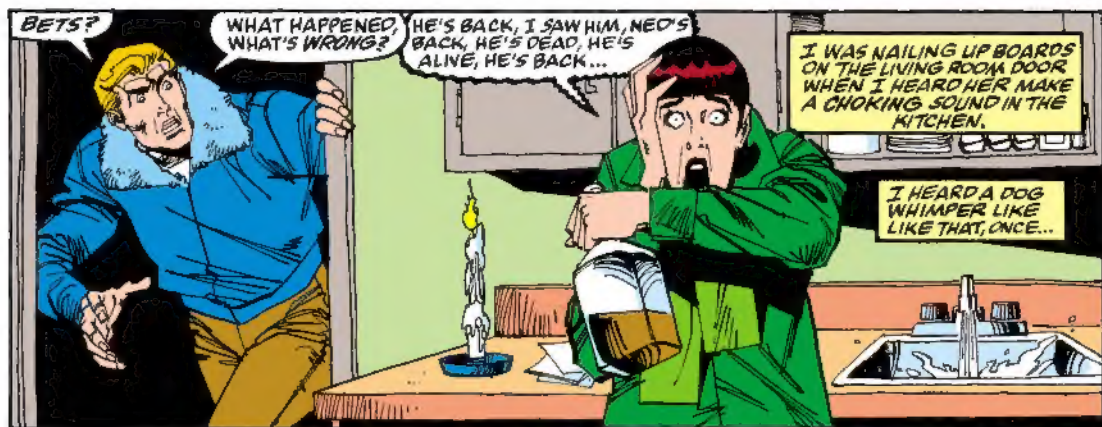
I GUESS SOME-TIMES LIFE IS LIKE A DRIVE-IN MOVIE.



**NIGHT
OF THE
LIVING
NED!**

GERRY CONWAY SAL BUSCEMA RICK PARKER BOB SHAREN JIM SALICRUP TOM DE FALCO
SCRIPT ART LETTERS COLOR EDITOR EDITOR IN CHIEF





... AFTER A CAR RAN OVER ITS RIGHT HIND LEG.

BETTY CLINGS TO ME, AND TELLS ME WHAT SHE SAW: THE LIGHTNING, THE RAIN, NED'S GRAVE...



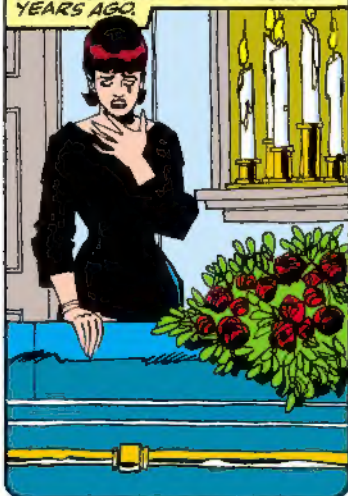
... AND THE GHOSTS: NED'S GHOST, AND THE OTHERS. HER VOICE IS LOW, AND SHE SHIVERS.

IT WAS A NIGHTMARE, BETS. JUST A DREAM.

BUT I WAS AWAKE, FLASH. AM I GOING INSANE?



I WONDER, NED LEEDS WAS BETTY'S HUSBAND; A FEW MONTHS BACK HE WAS KILLED BY TERRORISTS IN BERLIN. HE WAS THE SECOND MAN IN BETTY'S LIFE TO BE MURDERED; THE FIRST WAS HER BROTHER, BENNETT, KILLED IN A FIGHT BETWEEN DOG OCTOPUS AND SPIDER-MAN YEARS AGO.

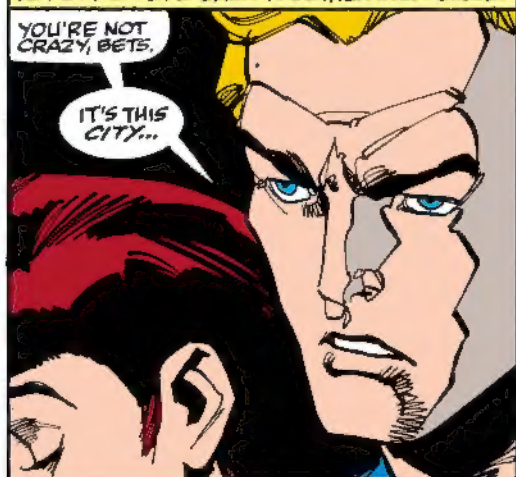


AFTER NED'S DEATH, BETTY HAD A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN, AND WHO COULD BLAME HER?



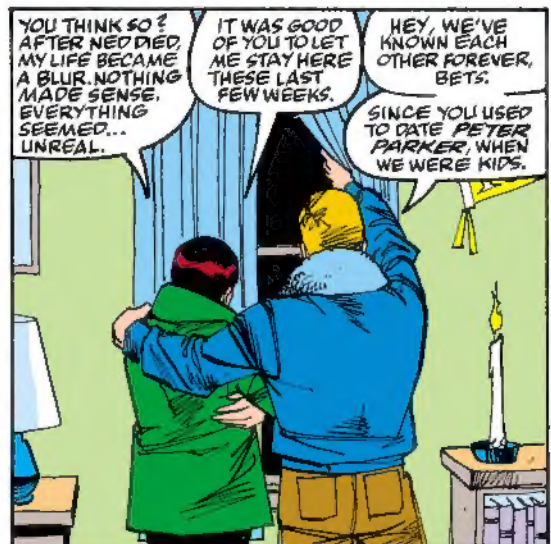
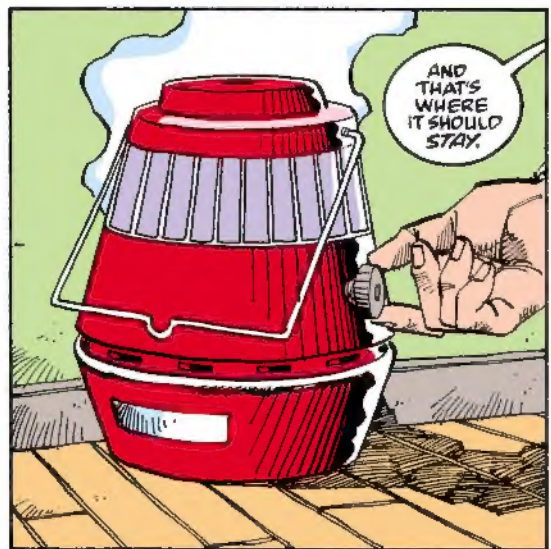
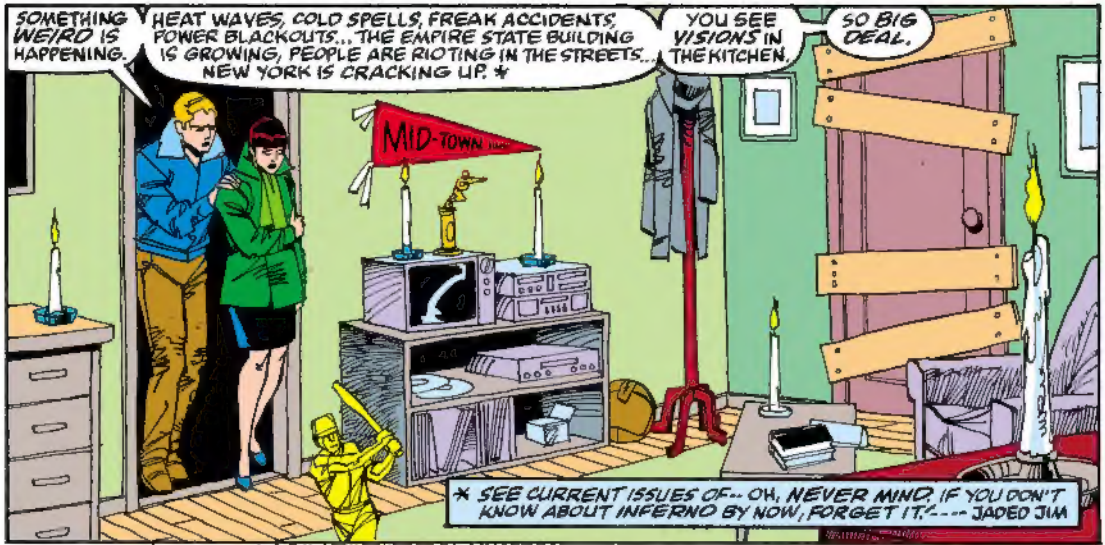
FOR A WHILE, SHE FELL UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF A PSEUDO-RELIGIOUS CULT, AND I THOUGHT WE'D LOST HER FOR GOOD...

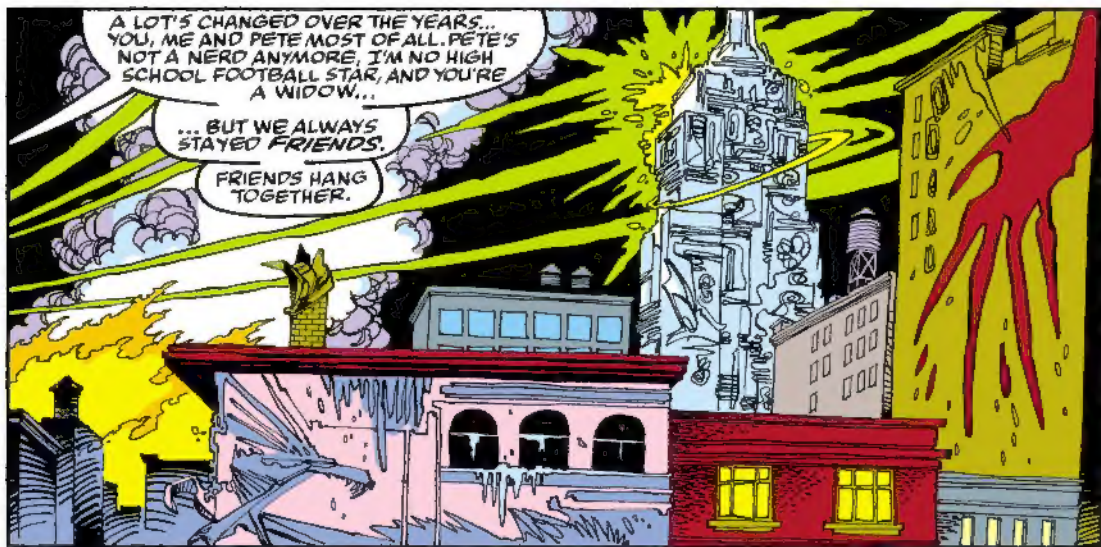
... BUT WITH SPIDER-MAN'S HELP, BETTY BROKE FREE, AND SHE'S BEEN WORKING REAL HARD TO PUT HER LIFE BACK TOGETHER EVER SINCE.



YOU'RE NOT CRAZY, BETS.

IT'S THIS CITY...





A LOT'S CHANGED OVER THE YEARS... YOU, ME AND PETE MOST OF ALL. PETE'S NOT A NERD ANYMORE, I'M NO HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL STAR, AND YOU'RE A WIDOW...

... BUT WE ALWAYS STAYED FRIENDS.

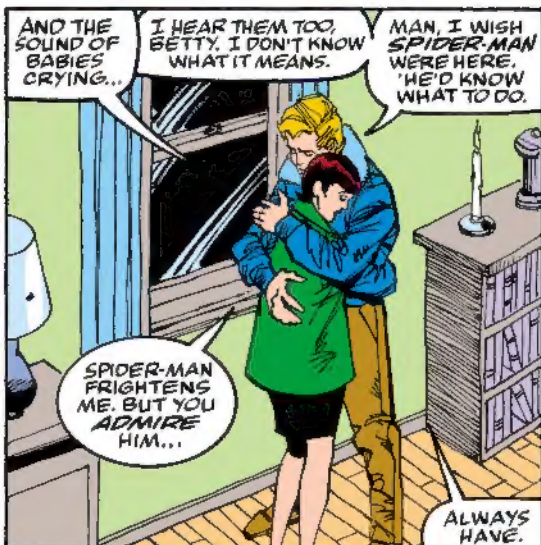
FRIENDS HANG TOGETHER.



PARTICULARLY NOW.

WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO US, FLASH? I SEE LIGHT EXPLODING OVER THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING.

I HEAR SCREAMS AND LAUGHTER.



AND THE SOUND OF BABIES CRYING...

I HEAR THEM TOO, BETTY. I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS.

MAN, I WISH SPIDER-MAN WERE HERE. 'HE'D KNOW WHAT TO DO.

SPIDER-MAN FRIGHTENS ME. BUT YOU ADMIRE HIM...

ALWAYS HAVE.



I GUESS EVERY TEEN'S GOTTA HAVE A HERO, AND SPIDER-MAN WAS MINE.

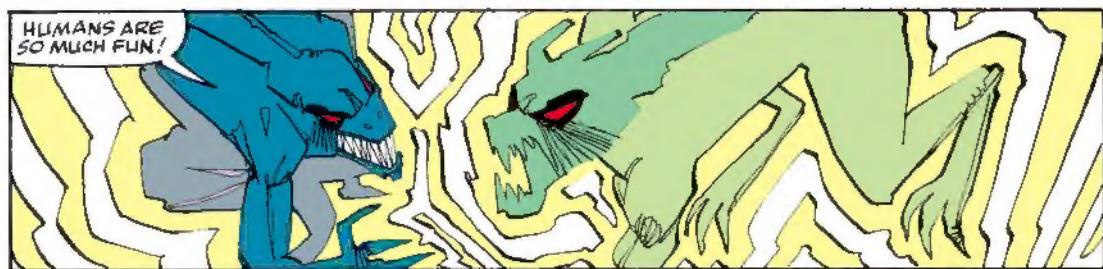
STILL IS.



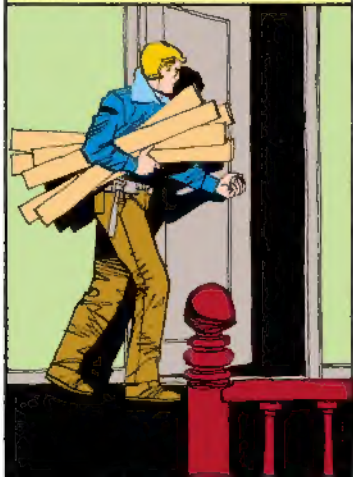
ALWAYS WILL BE.

NICE.

JUICY.



IF I COULD THINK OF SOMEWHERE ELSE TO TAKE BETTY, SOMEWHERE SAFE, WE'D BE GONE IN A MINUTE.



BUT THERE'S NOWHERE TO GO. ALL I CAN DO IS BOARD US IN. AND WAIT.

I HATE FEELING SO HELPLESS. I WANT TO DO SOMETHING. ANYTHING.



WE'RE THE LAST ONES STILL IN THE BUILDING.

EVERYONE ELSE LEFT HOURS AGO.



WHO KNOWS WHERE THEY ARE NOW?



OUT RIOTING, I GUESS.

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MANHATTAN?

TIMES LIKE THIS, I WISH I'D FINISHED COLLEGE. NOT THAT IT WOULD DO ME MUCH GOOD RIGHT NOW...



... BUT AT LEAST I'D FEEL A WHOLE LOT SMARTER.

FLASH THOMPSON, OVER-AGE JOCK: NO USE TO ANYONE, LEAST OF ALL BETS.



BACK BEFORE WE BECAME FRIENDS, PARKER USED TO TEASE ME FOR NOT BEING AS BRIGHT AS HE IS.

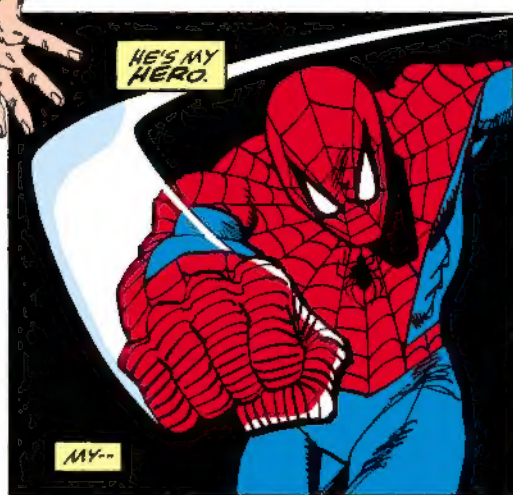
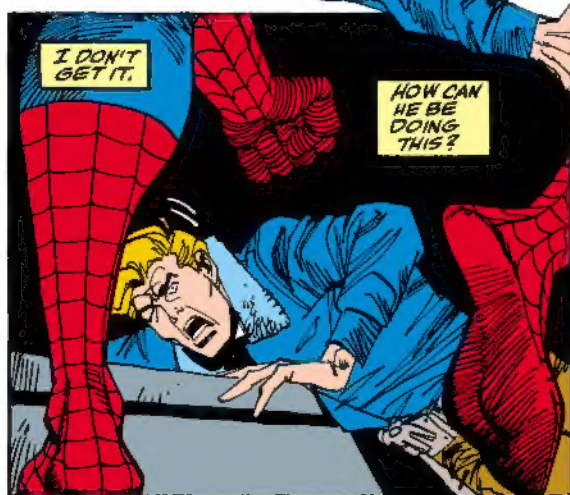
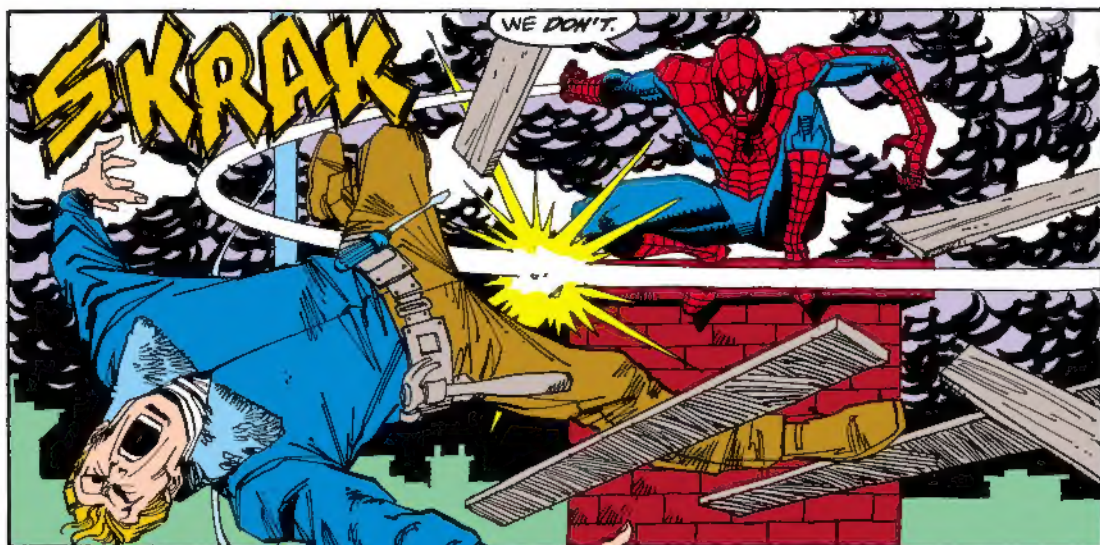
I WONDER IF HE KNEW HOW MUCH THAT HURT?

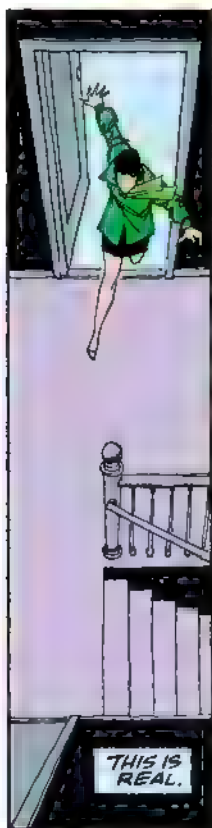
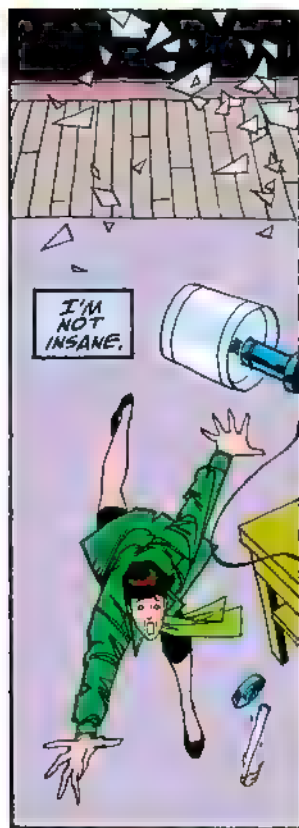
KNOWING PETE, PROBABLY NOT. HE NEVER --

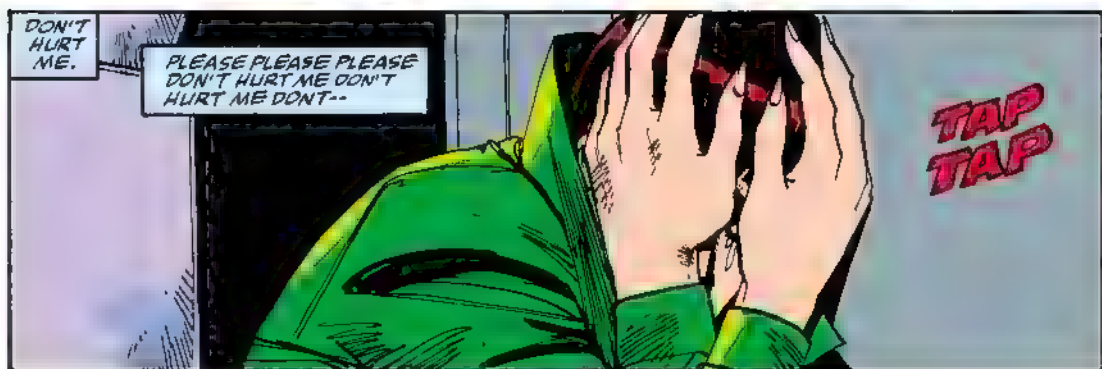
HI, GUY.

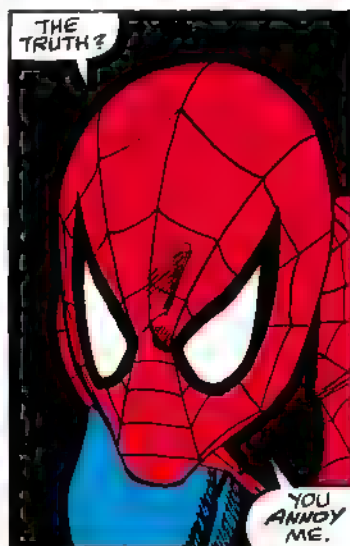
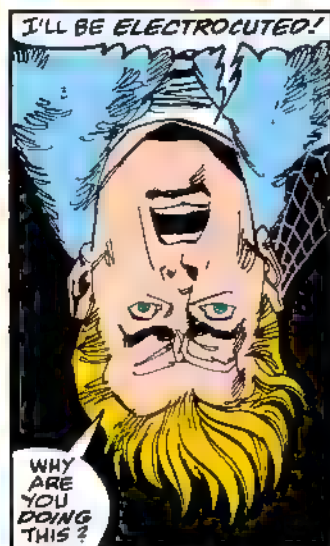
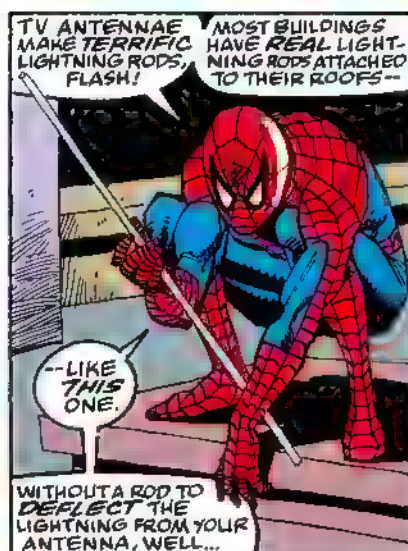
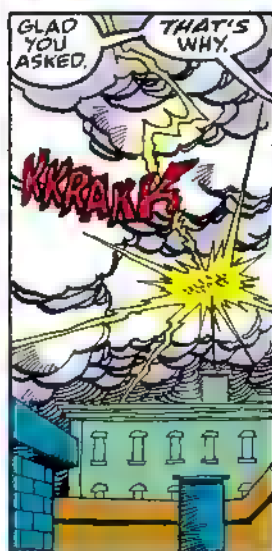
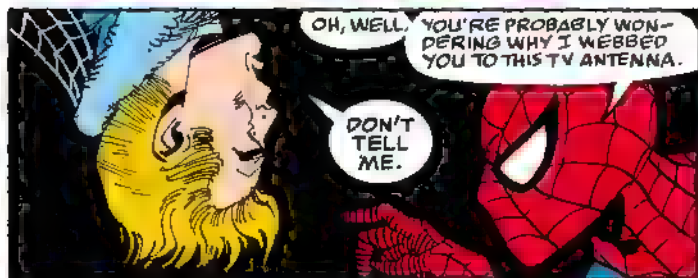


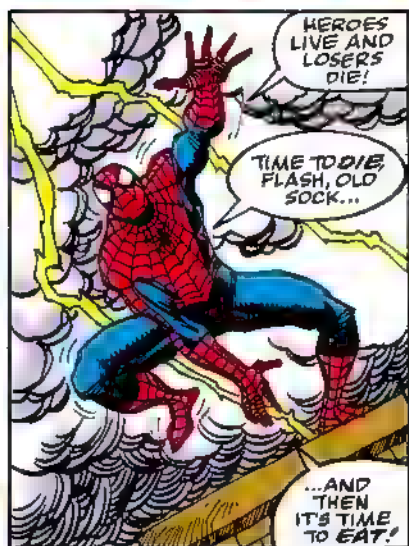
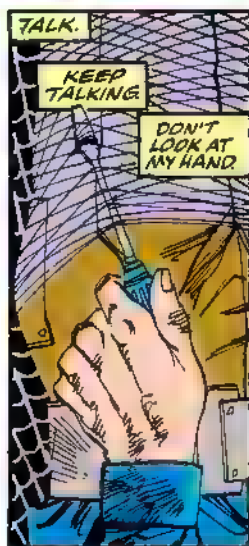
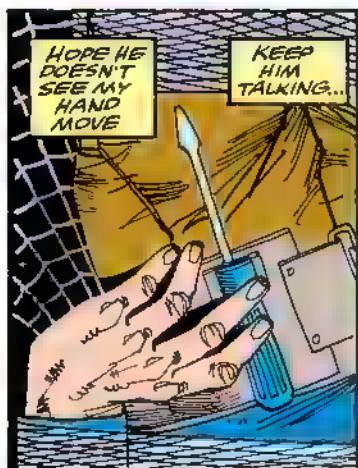
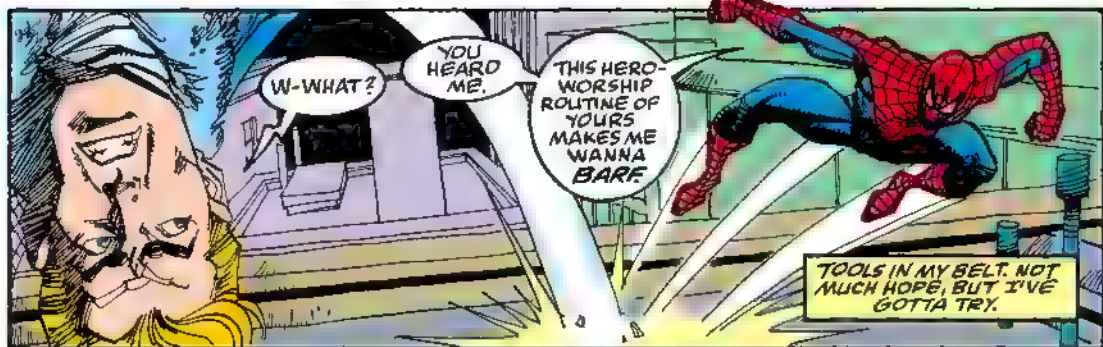


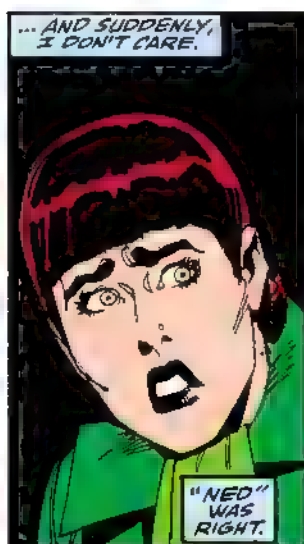
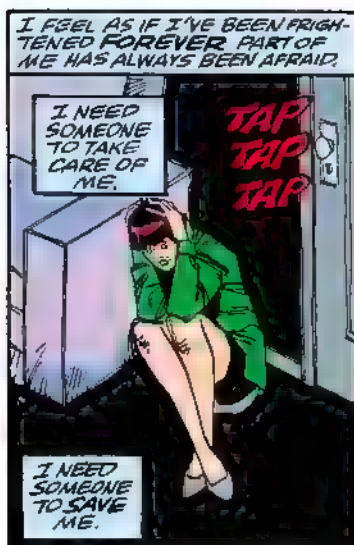


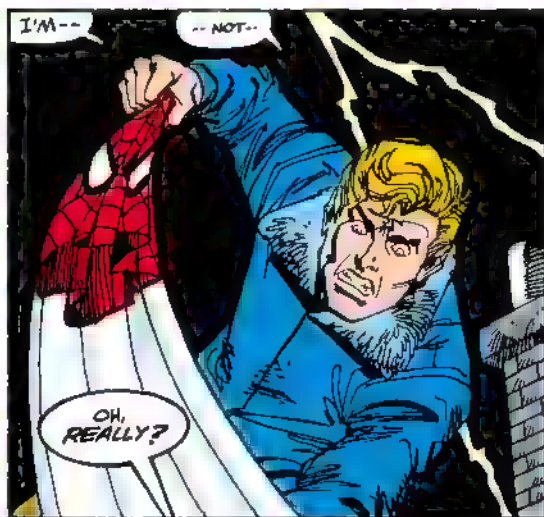
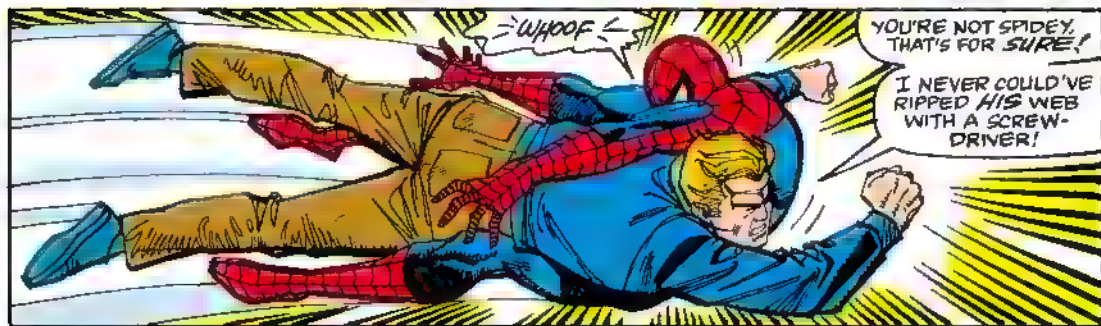
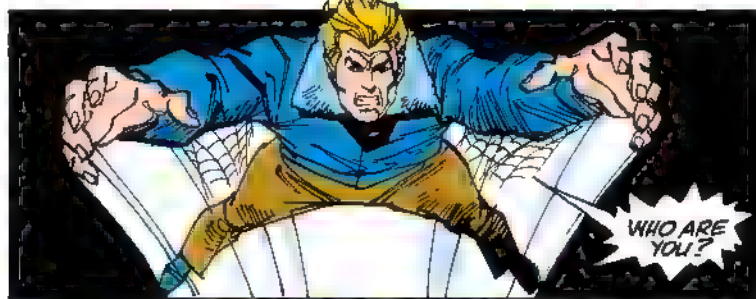
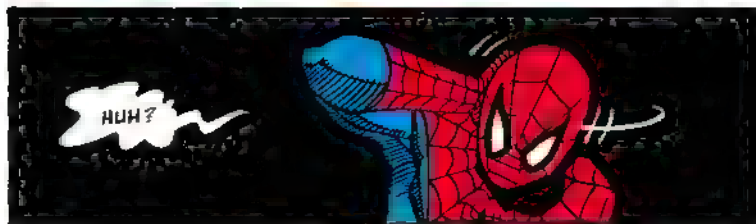














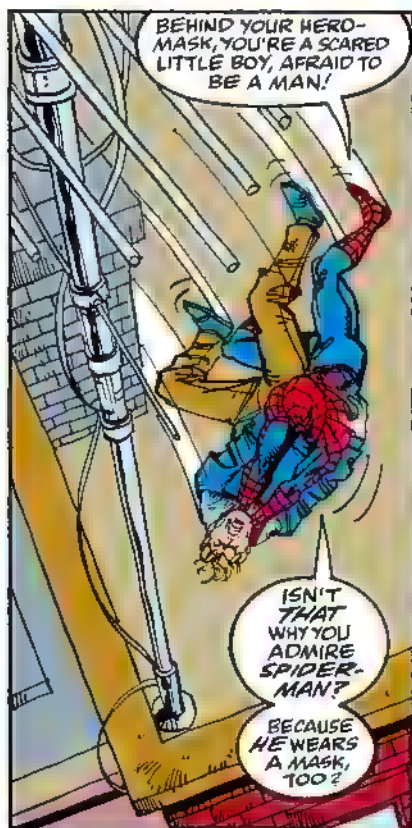
WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU CALL A MAN YOUR AGE WHO STILL DOESN'T KNOW WHAT HE WANTS TO BE WHEN HE GROWS UP? IN THE DICTIONARY UNDER "LOSER," THEY PUT YOUR PICTURE, FLASH, OLD CHUM, OLD SOCK.



DREAMING OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL GLORY DAYS--WHEN EVERYONE ADMIRERD FLASH THOMPSON, BIG MAN ON CAMPUS.



THAT FLASH WAS A HERO, LARGER THAN LIFE, A REGULAR STAR.



BEHIND YOUR HERO-MASK, YOU'RE A SCARED LITTLE BOY, AFRAID TO BE A MAN!

ISN'T THAT WHY YOU ADMIRE SPIDER-MAN? BECAUSE HE WEARS A MASK, TOO?



YOU'VE SEEN THE FACE BEHIND MY MASK, FLASH OLD SPOON, I'M THE REAL THING.

I'M EXACTLY WHAT I SEEM TO BE--A MONSTER OUT OF YOUR BLACKEST NIGHTMARE!

BUT WHAT ARE YOU, FLASH? HERO... OR LOSER?

WHO ARE YOU?!!

A FEW MOMENTS AGO, THE TAPPING STOPPED OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT DOWNSTAIRS.



WHEN I LOOKED OUTSIDE, THE HALLWAY WAS EMPTY.

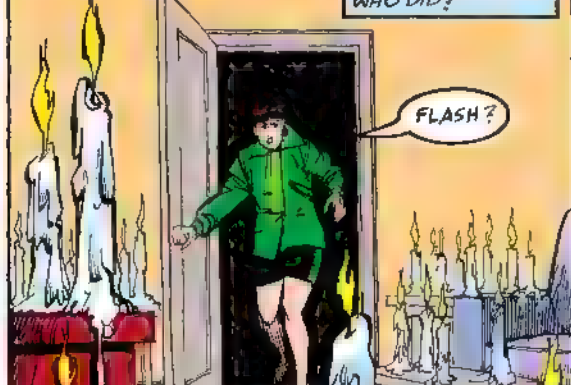
I RAN UP HERE, TO FLASH'S APARTMENT.

I BRACE MYSELF, WONDERING WHAT I'LL FIND INSIDE



CANDLES, DOZENS OF THEM. THE SMELL OF WAX IS SO THICK IT'S NAUSEATING.

I DIDN'T LIGHT ALL THESE CANDLES. WHO DID?



FLASH?

NO ANSWER.

I'M ALONE.



BUT THAT DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME AS MUCH AS IT DID BEFORE.



THERE'S A DIFFERENCE. I'M NOT JUST REACTING ANYMORE.

I'VE GOT A PLAN.



HEY, BABE.

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU. I LIT A CANDLE TO LIGHT YOUR WAY.

I LIT LOTS OF CANDLES.

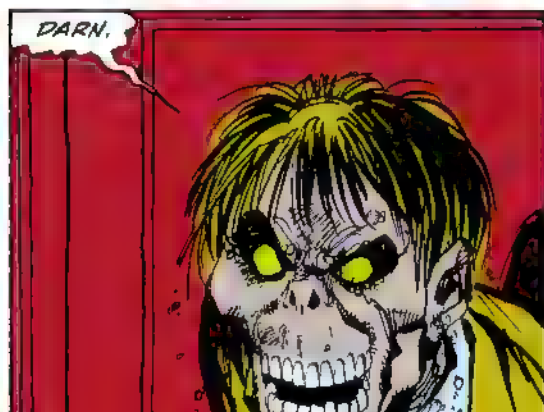


YOUR LOVIN' HUBBY HAS BEEN AWFULLY BORED.

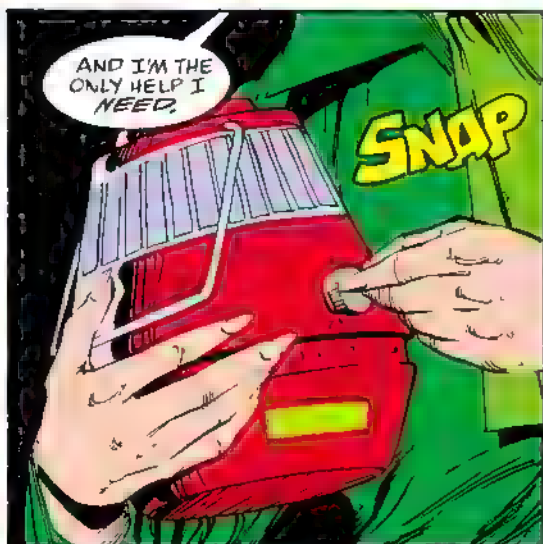
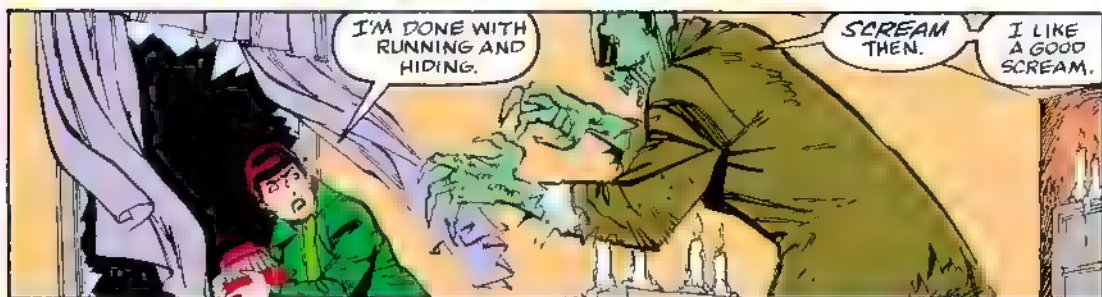
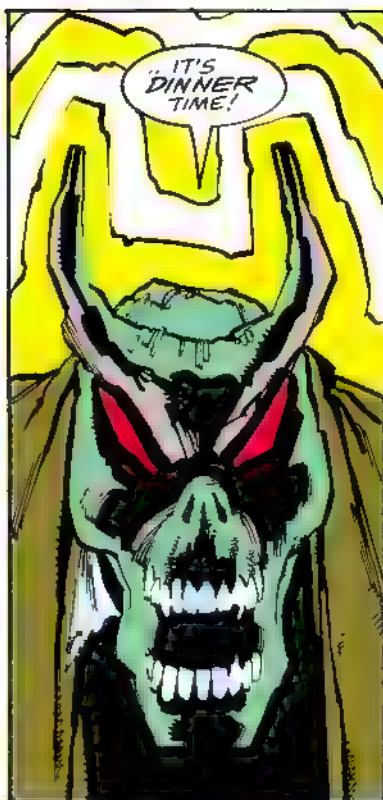
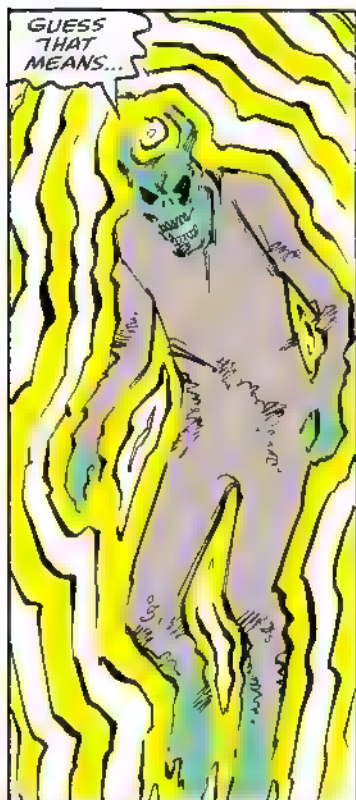
STOP PRETENDING, WHATEVER YOU ARE!

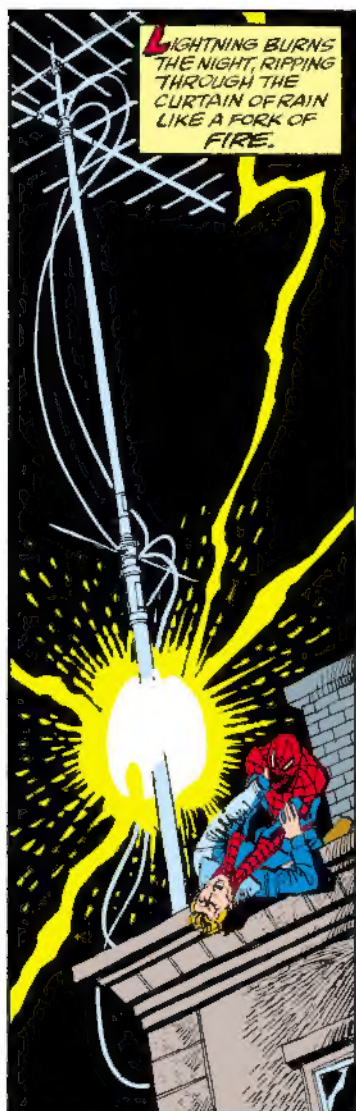
I KNOW YOU'RE NOT NED!

DARN.



GAME'S UP





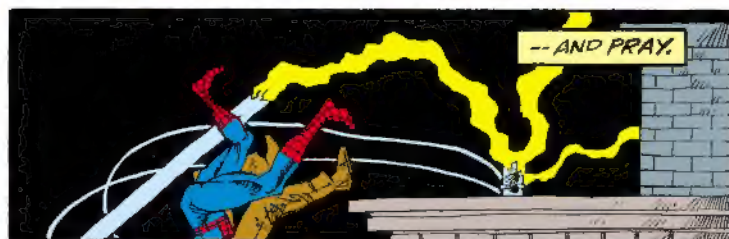
LIGHTNING BURNS THE NIGHT, RIPPING THROUGH THE CURTAIN OF RAIN LIKE A FORK OF FIRE.



BESIDE US, THE ANTENNA TOPPLES, WIRE SNAPPING LIKE A WHIP.



GASPING FOR BREATH, I TAKE A CHANCE, GRAB THE WIRE AS IT FLAILS BY--



-- AND PRAY.



I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A HERO.



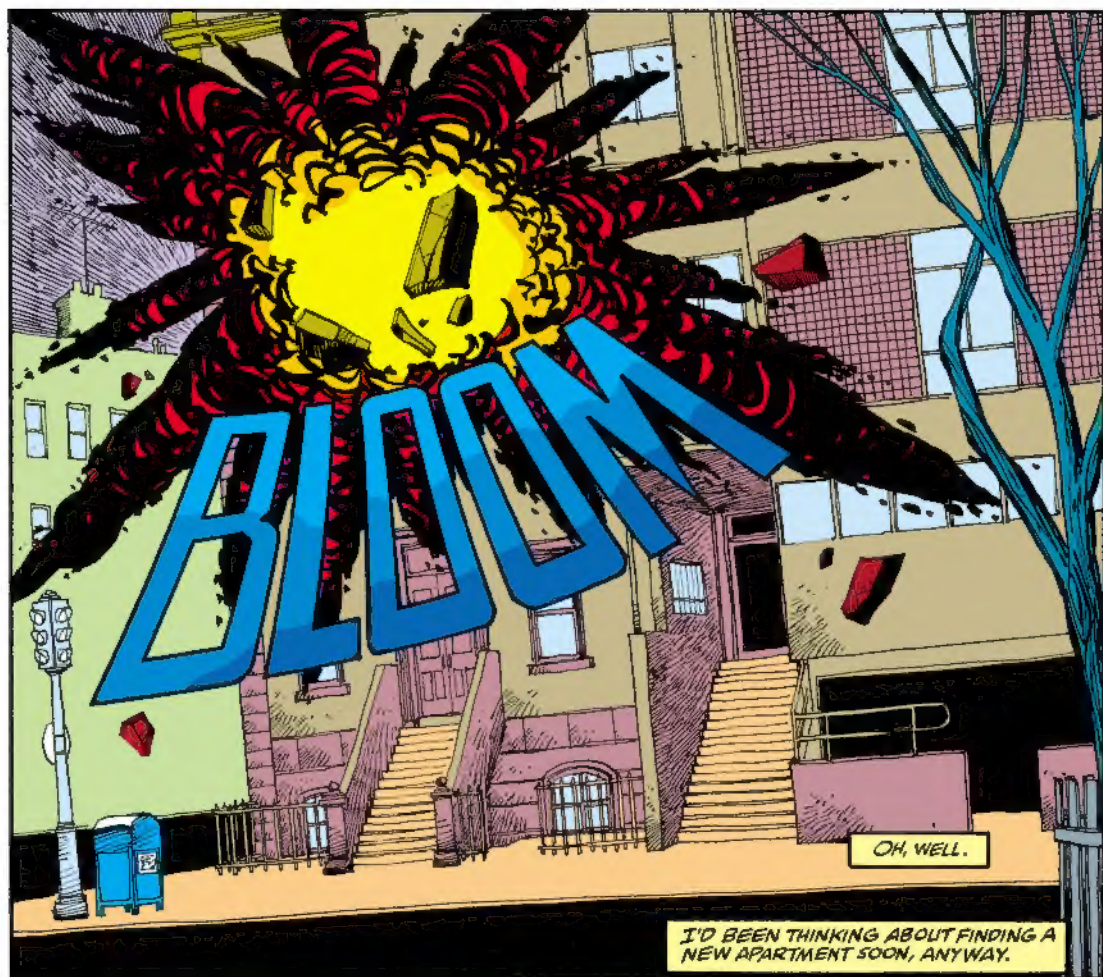
I GUESS SOMETIMES LIFE IS LIKE A DRIVE-IN MOVIE.

SKRASH

FLASH!

HUH?





OH, WELL.

I'D BEEN THINKING ABOUT FINDING A NEW APARTMENT SOON, ANYWAY.

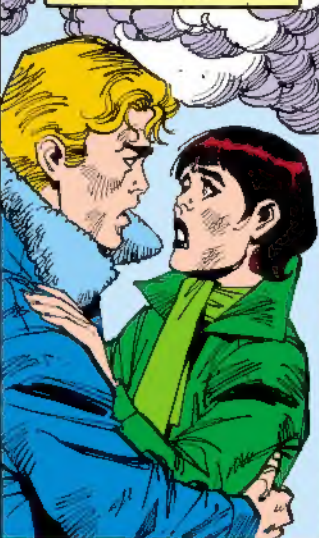
IN THE SMOKE I LOSE SIGHT OF BETS FOR JUST A MOMENT, THEN I FIND HER AGAIN, JUMPING THE STAIRS AHEAD OF ME.



I GRAB HER SHOULDER--

-- AND SHE STRUGGLES TO BREAK FREE.

-- BUT WHEN SHE SEES MY FACE, HER BODY GOES LIMP--



-- AND WE FIND OURSELVES LAUGHING TOGETHER WITH RELIEF.

WOW. "LET GO OF HIM, YOU CREEP!"

REMINDE ME NEVER TO GET YOU ANGRY.



RIGHT, I'M DANGEROUS WHEN I'M ANGRY.

OH, FLASH... IS IT OVER? REALLY OVER?

